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AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

1. (Previously presented) A wavelength division multiplexing optical transmission method wherein n (n : 4 or a larger integer) input signal light channels are connected to be transmitted, said method comprising:

grouping transmittable n (n : 4 or a larger integer) input signal light channels into groups each having x channels (x : integer, $2 < x < n$); and

for each group, whenever one or more of said x input channels does not currently include an input signal to be transmitted in said channel, transmitting a control light having a same power level as a total power of signal lights of said one or more missing input signals.

2. (Previously presented) A wavelength division multiplexing optical transmission method according to Claim 1, wherein:

in case the number of currently-transmitted signal lights in one group is smaller than x , the total level of the currently-transmitted signal lights and the control light is equal to a total possible level of transmittable x pieces of signal lights in the group.

3. (Previously presented) A wavelength division multiplexing optical transmission method according to Claim 1, wherein:

an optical transmission line on which said signal light and said control light are propagated is preset so that a wavelength characteristic of said optical transmission line is flat as would be in a case that light acquired by multiplexing n pieces of signal lights is propagated.